

ability to act from some process akin to the mental, or to some intelligent purpose; but it is true that plants turn to the light, and send their roots to water or food in the soil, not by selection of these means intelligently, but for the reason that the supply of food and light found increases the growth, and so the roots spread more where the food is than in infertile soil, and the same with the leaves. Thus the farmer's purpose should be to furnish the needed food in precisely the places where the roots can get it as soon as they need it. Suppose the manure has been plowed under by a flat turned furrow-slice, four or five inches thick, and is thus buried out of reach of the first roots, it will either be necessary to put the seed down equally deep in the soil, or supply fertilizers liberally for the first growth of the germ, or the young plant may die before it is able to reach the food, then beyond its ability to find. This matter well studied will settle this part of the business.

The selection of the seed is of equal importance, for as we have been taught, good seed sown in good ground yields hundred fold. Plump heavy seed is indispensable for a similar product (1). This selection of seed is the most effective means, with the best cultivation, for the improvement of varieties; and here we see again the analogy between vegetable and animal life. The feeding, and the breeding to make permanent the improvement made by the first, are hand and hand in the culture of plants and of animals as well. So the best kinds of seed only are to be selected for sowing in the best cultured soil. A well-known seed grower whose success in this special art is a household story on the best farms, began his work in this way with wheat the heads of which were two inches long, and ended it with the production of a grain weighing twice as much for the number of seeds, and with ears on the stems eight inches long. The produce of such seed under his good culture has been equal to seventy bushels per acre, and the grain has weighed 68 lb. to the bushel. A farmer procuring similar seed, or the best he can, and cultivating the land in the best manner may doubtless equal the quality of the seed but we may be very sure if he sows such seed on poor soil, the produce will be no better than the common run of the grain, just as the starved Jersey calf is nothing like the cow of which it is the progeny. Feed and breed must run together, and while it is true that feed will do a great deal, and in time approach the quality of the high bred stock, yet time is to be spent that will cost more than the seed will. So it is best to get the best possible seed by purchase.

The sowing depends entirely on the character of the plant. It has been found that three inches deep is the best, and experience shows that only the drill is able to secure this even depth. But broadcast sowing has done equally well when the seed has been spread skilfully and has been well covered by the harrow. With the broadcast seed sower and the sixteen foot seeding harrow, the drill is surpassed in the amount of work done in a day. But the drill is a great saving of labor and does the work far better than an unskilful sower could do it.

H. STEWART.

(1) We have grown splendid crops from poor seed, especially from barley grown in the English fens and taken to the chalk-soils.—Ea.

FROM SOUTHWESTERN NEW-YORK

EDS. COUNTRY GENTLEMAN — The season is one of remarkable growth of vegetation, the crops apparently trying to make up for lost time in the spring. Even the hay crop was more delayed than damaged by the drouth. Some thought they must begin haying at the usual time, and so began the latter part of June. Of course they cut only a meagre crop. If these persons had waited two or three weeks, they might have cut double the quantity off the same ground. The hay crop may be delayed by dry weather, and even look as though it were dying, but abundant rains may afterward alter the crop surprisingly.

The aftermath in all meadows is becoming abundant, and in some cases will have to be fed off, especially where a quantity of fodder corn or other supplement to pasture has not been provided. Several of our neighbors are raising corn fodder, and their methods of growing it, as well as the results, are worthy of notice. One had one and a half acres of sod in a good state of fertility, and this was heavily manured from the cow stable. It was then fitted and drilled thickly with a large growing variety of corn. In eight weeks from sowing he had corn measuring 10½ feet high, and so thick that a hen could penetrate it but slowly. The quantity of fodder produced by this land will be enormous. Others plant thickly in drills wide enough apart to cultivate with a horse. The best method of growing it is somewhat hard to decide but whether or not to grow it is easily decided. It is certainly better to grow this crop for cows than to turn on meadows and keep them eaten till winter.

The best time for cutting is till an unsettled question. One has begun feeding it in less than eight weeks from planting, and he finds it exceedingly heavy to handle, showing a content of a large quantity of water. But he says his cows have gained much in their mess since he began feeding. When it is to be fed during several months, it is necessary to begin before the corn is at its best. Before it is cut and cured for winter, it may be left till nubbins are formed. This is the stage for ensilaging corn, I suppose, but not having a silo or ever having seen one, I am not posted on this point. Planted corn has made an immense growth, and the fodder secured in this way will eke out the hay crop.

The weather for several weeks has been such, most of the time, as to favor highly the development of potato blight. Occasional days of cool, bracing, north winds have probably so far kept the blight in check. For several years, the fungus has not troubled our potatoes, but of course it may come at any time when atmospheric conditions are right. A circumstance which made me think the blight might come was the molding of bread within a few hours, showing a great degree of humidity and a warm atmosphere. This fungus grows are of such rapid development that sometimes a field of potatoes can be smelted a long distance, as the leaf rolls are opened by the disease and exposed to the atmosphere.

The excellent condition of the potato crop generally, will if it continues to digging time, bring the price to a low point. But as blight is reported from some quarters and drouths from others, we shall look for a discounted condition of the crop in the next government report. Of course we do not

want disease to come upon our own crops, but all would like to have a good price made by some means.

Hardware dealers report an advance in the price of all their goods except tin-plate and screws. The cause of this advance will, if it is due to increased wages, produce an advance in the price of farm produce. If due to a combination of capitalists, we may not look for much change. Where prices are raised in a legitimate manner, all are honestly benefited, but where unnatural and illegitimate methods are employed, some occupations must be injured. We are willing to pay a little more for our hardware if we can get better prices for what we have to sell.

CLARK M. DRAKE.

Steuben County, August 10.

TWO FENCES

THE READY-MADE FENCE COST—

80 rods wire fence in the roll, at 60c.....	\$48.00
Paid agent for setting same.....	8.00
2 end posts.....	2.00
40 posts at 20c.....	8.00
Labor setting posts.....	2.00
	—\$68.00

THE HOME MADE FENCE COST—

80 lb. No. 9 wire, at \$2... \$1.60	
400 lb. No. 11 wire, at \$2.05.....	8.20
Staples.....	30
2 end posts.....	2.00
40 posts at 20c.....	8.00
120 oak strips at 1c.....	1.20
Labor, 4 days, man and helper, at \$2.....	8.00
	—\$29.30

Difference in cost.....\$38.70

Two years ago, attracted by the advertisements of a certain wire fence, I bought 80 rods and engaged the agent, to whom I was referred by the maker, to put up the fence. It is a good-looking fence, and satisfactory enough except in one or two respects, which time discovered. The fence is of woven wire, and if a horse gets his foot through it, the upright wires catch and cut the hoof. The colts rub against it, and in time learn to swing in it as in a hammock, without injuring themselves, but somewhat warping the fence.

It suggested itself, on these accounts, that a somewhat stiffer support at wider intervals would be better. Last year another 80 rods of fence was put up at right angles to the above, in constructing which we used No. 9 wire for the top strand with eight No. 11 wires below. The posts were set 2 rods apart as in the first. At a distance of eight feet apart we stapled oak strips, which make it impossible to spread the wires, the fence, after the test of last winter's cold being as stiff and firm as when first made. A bull and other cattle are on each side of it, and although the two bulls sometimes lock horns through the fence they have never hurt anything.

We were so much pleased with the success of this fence, and its cheapness, that we have just built 240 rods more, with a few changes. We have put ratchets on the end posts and have set the small posts 4 rods apart, using instead of the oak strips, cabled wire uprights which cost two cents each, and give the fence a neater appearance.

W. A. WILSON.

Marion County, Ind.

SOME NOTES IN LA BRESSE.

EDS. COUNTRY GENTLEMAN — A visit to the Halles Centrales or great markets of Paris in the early morning is very interesting, and reveals something of that marvellous organization which is essential to the feeding of a great city. Here we find almost every form of animal and vegetable food, dealers and buyers alike characterized by great activity, and together providing for the needs of consumers, who, a few hours later, will find on their tables delicacies of all kinds.

Among poultry, all of which is dead, many kinds may be noted. Some of an ordinary type for common needs and common pockets, while others are of a higher class and command bigger prices. The latter embrace birds of the Faverolles type, from Seine-et-Oise, large and fleshy, together with the dainty *petits poussins*, choice morsels for *gourmands*, exquisite *Laféche*, *La Mans* and *Courtes Pattes*, from Southern Normandy, and *La Bresse* from the departments of Ain and Saône-et-Loire. Probably the latter will first command attention by reason of their peculiar shape, their marvellous quality of flesh, and their fineness of bone. But if we think of purchasing, our breath will be taken away, the demand varying from 25 to 40 francs for the finer specimens. And if we visit the south and southeast of France, sojourn on the Riviera for health or pleasure, we shall find great quantities of fowls partaking of the same shape of which more anon — though, happily, they do not make quite the same demand on our pockets as at Paris.

Recently I have spent a week in the La Bresse country, returning with wider ideas as to the possibilities of poultry-keeping, when properly carried on, and the desirability of seeking to produce the best qualities. A few of my observations may, therefore, be acceptable to your readers.

In the first place it may be explained that the La Bresse country lies at the west of the Jura mountains, north of the Rhone, and to the southeast of Burgundy. Its capital is the old City of Bourg, which is on the main line from Paris to Mont Cenis, or Geneva, and the first stopping place for fast trains after leaving the trunk route from Paris to Marseilles, say about 40 miles from Macon. Bourg is now chief city of the Department of the Ain, as the designation La Bresse is no longer used officially for this district. But La Bresse poultry are not confined to Bourg, as at the north, in the adjoining department of Saône-et-Loire, around the town of Louhans, fowls of this race are largely bred, and probably to an even greater extent. The country is undulating with high hills and mountains both east and west. It is very fertile, producing, in addition to the usual cereals, maize, buckwheat, roots, grapes and first-class qualities of fruit. There is all that intensity of cultivation which is characteristic of French agriculture, and in driving about the country one is struck by the fact that scarcely an inch of room is wasted. Small farms prevail, a place of 50 acres being regarded as large, and most of the farmers are owners as well as occupiers though there are many tenants under the chief "propriétaires." The people are evidently a thrifty race, both men and women being hard workers, looking personally after every detail, and believing in the virtue of little things. From what we could learn, they are, as a rule, comfortably well-off, even where their houses belie such a belief. While some of the dwellings are clean and